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March 9, 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

BY HAND DELIVERY

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Room 222
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

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RE: Comments in CC Docket No. 94-158

Dear Secretary:

Enclosed for filing is an original and nine copies of Consolidated Communications Public Services Inc.'s comments in connection with the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Notice of Inquiry, CC Docket No. 94-158, FCC No. 94-352 (released February 8, 1995).

Please date-stamp and return to our messenger the copy marked "Stamp and Return."

Very truly yours,

Josephine M. Hammack

Josephine M. Hammack

Enclosures

cc: Veronica M. Ahern

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Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

In the Matter of

Amendment of Policies and Rules)
Concerning Operator Services)
Providers and Call Aggregators)

CC Docket No. 94-158

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COMMENTS OF
CONSOLIDATED COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC SERVICES INC.

Consolidated Communications Public Services Inc. ("CCPS") hereby submits its comments in response to the Commission's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking ("NPRM") in the above captioned proceeding released February 8, 1995. CCPS provides specialized automated inmate and public telephone services including automated, operator assisted long distance services to numerous correctional centers throughout Illinois.

THE COMMISSION RULES APPLICABLE
TO INMATE-ONLY TELEPHONES
AT CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS
DO NOT REQUIRE REVISION

The Commission's underlying rationale for the treatment of inmate-only telephones as an exception to the "aggregator" requirement remains intact: correctional institutions are exceptional locations with special circumstances. Those circumstances center on security, toll fraud and preventing further criminal activity by inmates.

Correctional facilities choose a single long distance carrier for each site to maximize their ability to control the security of their site and to detect or prevent criminal or abusive activity. Numerous examples of the positive use of telecommunications systems at correctional centers were offered in comments in the Commission's CC Docket 92-77, Billed Party Preference proceeding, including comments filed by the U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons and numerous state prison authorities. The Mississippi Department of Corrections' comments cited its experience in curtailing nationwide money order scams because of its control over inmate calls and the single source provider of long distance at an institution.¹

¹ Mississippi comments at 1.

Real-time call detail information even assists prison officials in locating escapees, according to comments filed by VAC.²

Other controls available to correctional officials include:

1. Time limits which enable calls to be disconnected after a predetermined amount of time. This allows all inmates access to the phones instead of one inmate dominating a phone.
2. A blocked numbers database allows the phone numbers for judges, jurors, witnesses, and correctional officers to be protected from harassment from inmates.
3. Monitoring and recording equipment enables facilities to solve murder cases, drug deals and other crimes perpetrated using the phone. Inmates have been caught setting up telephone subscription accounts and selling them to fellow inmates. Inmates have been apprehended in illegal activity setting up accounts using correctional officer's names.
4. Inmates have successfully used services such as 3-way calling to contact catalog service centers to order

² VAC comments at 6.

goods and services and charge them to stolen credit cards. The stolen goods are then resold at a discounted price, thereby successfully establishing multi-million dollar businesses out of their jail cells. This type of fraud has been curtailed by the use of on-premise equipment (which detects 3-way calling and plays random announcements) with monitoring and recording equipment.

5. Automating collect calls eliminates inmate harassment of live operators.
6. PIN numbers give the facility the avenue to tie particular inmates to calls that can be used in future investigations for fraud or other criminal activity.
7. Inmates are not allowed to dial 800 or 900 numbers due to the nature of the call and potential abuse.
8. Another call control feature is the ability to shut down particular phones, housing units or the whole facility by time of day and any day of the week to give the facility the ability to control phone usage as a security device.

CONCLUSION

For all the above-stated reasons, CCPS requests the Commission continue to exempt inmate-only telephones at correctional institutions from the definition of aggregator and therefore, let these phones remain exempt from TOSCIA and the Commission's implementing regulations.

Respectfully submitted,


Ellyn Elise Crutcher

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March 9, 1995